

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, April 2, 2004

CHIEF OUTLINES MPDC'S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mayor Williams's proposed budget for fiscal year 2005 supports additional neighborhood patrols and other major priorities of the MPDC, Chief Ramsey told DC Councilmembers this week. In testimony before the Judiciary Committee, the Chief said the proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins October 1, 2004 is approximately \$398 million, or an increase of about 5.4 percent. The budget supports 4,563 full-time employees, including 3,800 sworn police officers – an enhanced staffing level that the Department will reach by the end of the current fiscal year. The budget also includes funds to “civilianize” 83 administrative or support positions now held by sworn personnel, thus allowing those officers to be reassigned to operational duties. Other priorities funded in the proposed FY05 budget include enhanced traffic safety, with the addition of more photo radar and red-light camera systems; victim services, with continued funding for the Family Liaison Specialist Unit; training; emergency preparedness, and continued use-of-force reforms. The Chief said next year's budget also supports two organizational changes: the MPDC is assuming responsibility for DC Protective Services, which protects DC government buildings, while the Public Safety Communications Center (9-1-1/3-1-1) is moving to the new Office of Unified Communications.

- ① Read Chief Ramsey's complete budget statement at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2004/03/033004.shtml>
- ① For more information about the budget process in DC, visit the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website at:
<http://cfo.dc.gov/budget/budget/index.shtml>

DC COUNCIL HEARS FROM THE MPDC ON SCHOOL SAFETY ISSUES

With the DC Council considering legislation that would transfer responsibility for school security management from the DC Public Schools to the MPDC, Department officials testified this week at a Council hearing examining the proposal. Assistant Chief Winston Robinson Jr. updated Councilmembers on the Department's implementation of the security plan drafted for Ballou High School, in the aftermath of the recent fatal shooting of a Ballou student inside the Southeast school. Robinson said short-term changes have included an increase in the number of sworn MPDC personnel in the school (from 2 to 6), improved entry and parking lot controls, and expanded conflict resolution, intervention and prevention programs. Beyond Ballou, the MPDC has taken some preliminary steps to assess school safety needs on a citywide basis. For example, the Department is working with the Sandia National Laboratories on an assessment of school security technology, and it has reached out to school officials and parents' representatives on security-related issues. Finally, Robinson testified that Chief Ramsey has been meeting with top DCPS officials to discuss improved coordination between the two agencies. The DCPS and MPDC have agreed to work cooperatively on developing a formal Memorandum of Understanding that will guide continued reform efforts.

- ① Read Assistant Chief Robinson's statement at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2004/03/032904.shtml>
- ① The full Ballou School Safety Plan is available (in PDF) at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/MPD_Ballou_safetyplan.pdf
- ① For other information and resources on school safety, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/schoolsafetylinks.shtml>

“OPERATION FIGHT BACK” TARGETS CRIME AND DISORDER PROBLEMS ON QUARLES STREET, NE

The 4800 and 4900 blocks of Quarles Street, NE have long been plagued by drug activities and associated violence. So in mid-February, the MPDC’s 6th District and other government agencies came together for “Operation Fight Back” – a concerted attack on crime and the conditions that can breed crime in the community. MPDC officers set up a safety compliance checkpoint along 49th Street, NE, looking for traffic safety and other violations. And throughout the day, 6D officers made 12 arrests for drugs and other offenses. The key to the success of “Operation Fight Back” is the involvement of other agencies, organized through the ward CORE Team. Those agencies were out in full force on Quarles Street, NE. The Department of Public Works towed away 18 abandoned vehicles. The Department of Housing and DPW tackled a rat problem. The Water and Sewer Authority cleaned the sewer at the intersection 49th and Quarles Street. And a Pepco worker removed two pairs of boots hanging from power lines. A problem apartment building in the 4800 block of Quarles Street, NE, in which fewer than half of the units are legally occupied by tenants, also received considerable attention. Residents met with representatives from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, MPDC and the US Justice Department to determine what could be done about the drug dealers, prostitutes and homeless occupying the vacant apartments. DCRA pledged to follow up with the resident manager, who has an apartment in the building. From debris to criminals, Quarles Street, NE is now a cleaner place, thanks to the teamwork of the officers, community members and DC agencies in PSA 601.

MPDC REPORTS ON ACTIVITY AT STATIONARY PHOTO RADAR SPEEDING REDUCTION CAMERA

In late February, DC became the first jurisdiction in North America to activate a photo radar speeding reduction camera in a stationary location, operating 24 hours a day. Over the next 30 days, the MPDC issued warning notices only to motorists who were caught speeding aggressively in the 600 block of Florida Avenue, NE, where the camera is located. During that 30-day warning period, the technology monitored more than 104,000 vehicles and found that 16,228—or 15.6 percent—were speeding above the threshold speed established for the program. The highest recorded speed during the warning period was 88 mph, in the 25-mph zone. Beginning March 28, the MPDC began issuing actual speeding tickets based on violations captured by the camera on Florida Avenue, NE. During the first four days of “live” operation, the speeding reduction camera detected 1,245 aggressive speeders among the more than 8,500 vehicles that passed by the unit—or an aggressive speeding rate of about 14.6 percent. The highest recorded speed during these four days was 73 mph. The MPDC will continue to monitor activity and results at its first stationary photo radar camera location, as it considers the possible expansion of the technology to other locations.

NEWS & NOTES

Civilian Job Vacancies. The MPDC continues to seek qualified candidates for a number of management, technical and support positions within its civilian ranks. For a complete list of civilian job openings—along with requirements and application procedures—go to <http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/civilian.shtm>.

Crime Victims’ Rights Week. National Crime Victims’ Rights Week is April 18-24. This is a time to remember and recognize victims of crime, and to increase public awareness of victims’ rights and services. Various events and activities will be taking place in DC during the week. For more information about the national observance, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ncrvw/welcome.html>.

① For more details and photos, see: http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/6th/ss_fightback610_0204.shtm

① For background on “Operation Fight Back” and additional success stories, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/fightback.shtm>

① More details on the fixed-site photo radar camera are at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2629>

① In addition to the stationary camera, the MPDC’s photo radar speeding reduction program includes six mobile photo radar vehicles that are deployed to enforcement zones across the city. For more information about the program, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 4/2/04)

- 2004: 47
- 2003: 58
- % Change: -19.0%
- Closure Rate: 53.2% (25 closures)

Adult Arrests (week end. 3/27/04)

- Total: 945
- Drugs: 195
- Weapons: 21
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 23
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 123

Firearm Recoveries (as of 3/30/04)

- March: 174
- 2004 Total: 559

Traffic Fatalities (as of 4/2/04)

- 2004: 14
- 2003: 10
- % Change: +40.0%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC’s Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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